



# Celebrate

**Seventh Sunday after Epiphany**  
**February 20, 2022**

Your people cry out for mercy. Console hearts that long for forgiveness. Mend broken relationships. Heal bodies that suffer chronic pain or illness.

Strengthen and deliver all whose spirits are troubled (*especially*). God of grace, near our prayer.

You bind us together into one family. Teach us to forgive one another and to resolve conflicts with humility and patience. Bless families of all shapes and sizes, and show love to those who are lonely or grieving. God of grace,

**near our prayer.**

A brief silence.

You teach us to love our neighbors and enemies alike. Encourage your church to follow the leading of your love, especially when it is risky or difficult. Help us to show mercy just as we have first received mercy. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Nurture fields that lie dormant, resting until it is time to bloom again. Bless farmers and all who cultivate fields and urban gardens. Give favorable weather for planting. Bring forth from buried seed an abundant harvest, and guard against famine and disease. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Look upon our world with mercy, that we delight in an abundance of peace. Protect all whose lives are marred by war and civil unrest. Release political prisoners and amplify the voices that challenge us to seek forgiveness and pursue nonviolence. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

We praise you for the saints who have inherited the fullness of your kingdom (*especially*). As you have raised them to imperishable and eternal life, sustain us in faith by the promise of resurrection. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

## Preparing for Next Week

**Monday** Psalm 38. **Tuesday** 1 Corinthians 11:17-22, 27-33. **Wednesday** (commemoration of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, martyr, 156) Luke 17:1-4. **Thursday** Psalm 99. **Friday** (commemoration of Elizabeth Fedde, deaconess, 1921) Acts 10:1-8. **Saturday** Deuteronomy 9:15-24. **Transfiguration of Our Lord** Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99; 2 Corinthians 3:12—4:2; Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a].

Mercy. Mercy. Mercy. Joseph lives it in Egypt. Jesus preaches it in the gospel. The Spirit guides us into merciful lives with the power of forgiveness to reconcile what is fractured and divided. Such merciful living is the baptismal blessing of having put on Christ. It is the gift of the life-giving Spirit. It is a reflection of God's glory revealed in Christ.

## Prayer of the Day

### First Reading

**Genesis 45:3-11, 15**  
*Many years after being sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, Joseph reveals himself to them. Now the second-in-command in Egypt, Joseph reassures his brothers that God has used their evil intentions for good to preserve life during a devastating famine, and Joseph forgives them.*

Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.<sup>4</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.<sup>5</sup> And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.<sup>6</sup> For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest.<sup>7</sup> God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors.<sup>8</sup> So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.<sup>9</sup> Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay.<sup>10</sup> You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have.'<sup>11</sup> I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>15</sup>And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

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The lowly shall possess the land; they will dwell in a bun-dance of peace.

<sup>2</sup>Do not be provoked by evildoers;

do not be jealous of those who do wrong.

<sup>3</sup>For they shall soon wither like the grass,

and like the green grass fade away.

<sup>3</sup>Put your trust in the LORD and do good;

dwell in the land and find safe pasture.

<sup>4</sup>Take delight in the LORD,

who shall give you your heart's desire. R

<sup>5</sup>Commit your way to the LORD; put your trust in the LORD,

and see what God will do.

<sup>6</sup>The LORD will make your vindication as clear as the light

and the justice of your case like the noonday sun.

<sup>7</sup>Be still before the LORD and wait patiently.

Do not be provoked by the one who prospers,

the one who succeeds in evil schemes.

<sup>8</sup>Refrain from anger, leave rage alone;

do not be provoked; it leads on to evil. R

<sup>9</sup>For evildoers shall be cut off,

but those who hope in the LORD shall possess the land.

<sup>10</sup>In a little while the wicked shall be no more;

even if you search out their place, they will not be there.

<sup>11</sup>But the lowly shall possess the land;

they will delight in abundance of peace.

<sup>39</sup>But the deliverance of the righteous comes from you, O LORD;

you are their stronghold in time of trouble.

<sup>40</sup>You, O LORD, will help them and rescue them; you will rescue them from the wicked and deliver them, because in you they seek refuge. R

*In the Apostles' Creed, we speak of the "resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting." Using the metaphor of a planted seed and the story of Adam, Paul preaches passionately about the mystery of following Christ's perfect life into eternity.*

is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup>But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. <sup>47</sup>The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup>As

was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. <sup>49</sup>Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

<sup>50</sup>What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

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### Luke 6:27-38

*Jesus continues to address a crowd of his disciples. He invites his followers to shower radical love, blessing, forgiveness, generosity, and trust even on enemies and outsiders. Living in harmony with God's intent brings the reward of overflowing blessing.*

[Jesus said:] "But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup>bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. <sup>29</sup>If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. <sup>30</sup>Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. <sup>31</sup>Do to others as you would have them do to you.

<sup>32</sup>"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup>If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. <sup>34</sup>If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what

credit is that to you? For even sinners judge; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; <sup>38</sup>give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."