

Epaphras Prayer Letter

10th Sunday after Pentecost

“For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world” (vs. 33). This is a rather odd verse. Coupled with Jesus earlier pronouncement to Nicodemus, “No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man” (Jn.3:13), Jesus is both the bread of God and the life of the world. The people who heard these words responded, “Give us this bread always” (vs. 34). The hearers have grasped it rightly, there is only Jesus. He is the only one who ascends into heaven. The mystic goal of the pilgrim’s via, the beatific vision, attained through pious activity isn’t available. Jesus denies the human quest of rising into heaven to catch God unaware as he engages the divine perichoreses where the Trinity dances together in love. There is only Jesus, and he has come down to earth in the Incarnation. He has come down to you and for you. He comes in the most ordinary and subtle means: a splash of water and the speaking of the divine name; a sip of wine, a crust of bread, both with the announcement, “The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ given and shed for you.” A puff of air past the preacher’s lips, shaped and modulated by the human tongue and larynx, yet those words so formed and produced deliver the act of your election to you in the absolution of all your sin. Too humble? Too meek? Too insignificant and meager? For some, of course, they are! For those numbered among that “some,” they take the stance which Naaman did in wanting greater respect of his person and the display of some incantation as a divine sign (cf. 1 Kings 5:11).

Responsive Reading: Psalm 19:7-10

LDR: The law of the LORD...
ALL: **is perfect, refreshing the soul.**
LDR: The statutes of the LORD...
ALL: **...are trustworthy, making wise the simple.**
LDR: The precepts of the LORD...
ALL: **...are right, giving joy to the heart.**
LDR: The commands of the LORD...
ALL: **...are radiant, giving light to the eyes.**
LDR: The decrees of the LORD...
ALL: **...are firm, and all of them are righteous.**
ALL: **They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb.**



Lesson: Ephesians 6:13-17

Put on the full armor of God ... Stand firm with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.



Gospel: John 15:9-13, 17

Jesus taught: “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. This is my command: Love each other.”

SALEM FAMILY EVENTS



Last Week



Announcements....

- A VERY SPECIAL THANKS to **Sarah Morrisette, Maggie Vadnais, and other volunteers** who planned, organized, and put on Vacation Bible School the last week!!!!
- A VERY SPECIAL THANKS to **Vicki Bengtson, the Picnic Committee, and all the other volunteers** who planned, organized, and coordinated this year's picnic!!!!
- A presenter from the Gideons will join us next week during the regular service. Plan if you'd like to donate to their ministry.
- On August 15th, we will celebrate the baptism and confirmation of 5 adults connected to our parish during the 9:30 service.
- Pastor Rob has submitted a letter of resignation (copies available in the entryway (narthex)).



- Q: What is a tree's favorite soda? A: Root Beer.
- Q: Why doesn't McDonald's serve escargot? A: It's not fast food!
- Q: What happened after an explosion at a French cheese factory? A: All that was left was de brie.
- Q: Who's a dessert's favorite actor? A: Robert Brownie, Jr.
- What do you call blueberries playing the guitar? A jam session.
- Did you see the movie about the hot dog? It was an Oscar wiener.
- Q: Which type of vegetable tries to be cool, but is only partly successful at it? A. The radish.
- Did you hear the one about the guy who invented Tic Tacs? They say he made a mint.
- Q: What do you call a fake noodle? A. An impasta.
- Q: Why do watermelons have fancy weddings? A: Because they cantaloupe.

