

*Love, alone the Law fulfilling, Is the bond of perfectness,
Love, Who came a Victim willing, Paid our debt and brought us peace;
Therefore love and peace in union Ever grow in sweet Communion,
And through love we may abide One with Him Who for us died.*

POSSIBLE Prayer of the Church 🕊 **13th Sunday after Trinity August 30th 2026**

*Heavenly Father, we poor sinners beg of You this day to be merciful
unto us and to all those in need for whom we pray this day.*

Heavenly Father, Your Son has triumphed by His Cross. Give grace to Your Church to proclaim His victory throughout the world - the victory of that love which hate could not destroy and that life which death could not overcome. **LORD in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Gracious LORD, we praise You for retaining among us Your Holy Word and Sacraments. Continue to raise up faithful stewards of Your mysteries, that repentance and the forgiveness of sins in Christ's name would be proclaimed in our midst and throughout all the world. Prepare all Your baptized children [Indie] to be faithful confessors of the hope that is in them. **LORD in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Lover of mankind, bind our families together in perfect harmony and rule our hearts with the peace of Christ. Cause His Word to dwell richly among us, and let fathers and heads of the household teach and admonish their families in all wisdom. Let our songs, words and deeds be done in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, with thanksgiving. **LORD in Your mercy, hear our....**

Almighty God, grant health and wisdom to those in authority, that they may carry out their duties according to Your will. Enable them to protect us from violence and evil and to maintain peace and righteousness. Let our land be filled with citizens who love You with all their heart, mind, soul and strength, and who love their neighbors as themselves. **LORD in Your mercy, hear our....**

Lord, You have shown us Your mercy in Your Son, Jesus Christ, who became our Good Samaritan to save us from all evil and death. Give us compassionate hearts, that we may not be blind to the needs of others but show to all Your mercy and love. [We especially pray for **Faith & Our Savior Prayers**] ... and all those we each name and keep in our hearts in personal prayer. Bind up our wounds, and send us forth to bind up the wounds of others with the healing balm of Your Gospel. **LORD in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

At Your invitation, O Father, we come to Your Supper for rest. Preserve us from impenitence and unbelief, cleanse us from our unrighteousness, and clothe us with the righteousness purchased with Your Son's blood. **LORD in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, grant to those who mourn comfort in their grief and grace to rejoice in the reunion to come with those who have died in the faith. **LORD in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

These and whatever other things You would have us ask of You, O God, grant us for the sake of Jesus Christ, Your only Son, our LORD and Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

TRINITY-13/C Luke 10:23-37 WHO [REALLY] Is My NEIGHBOR? 9.11.26 F.OS.L

PRAYER Dear LORD Jesus, You are the only Good Samaritan Who has seen us lying in our blood-guiltiness on the way of this life. You did have mercy on us and took away the sins of the world. We pray You, fill our hearts and minds with this good-Samaritan spirit that we do not harden our hearts or pass by on the other side when we see the misery and evil found around us and throughout this sin-cursed earth, but follow Your example of compassion and Christian love. We ask You to hear our prayer and to bless the proclamation of Your Word of Law and Gospel. **Amen.**

WHO'S MY NEIGHBOR The **lawyer** asks Jesus, "*Who is my neighbor?*" That sounds like an innocent enough question. The Law says to love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself. So the lawyer asks, "**Just who is my neighbor?**" Seems logical. But think about it. **Why** would you want to ask that question? What would have to be going through your mind to make you ask? The lawyer asks this question because he wants to **narrow down** who fits into that category of "neighbor." You see, the smaller you can make that group, the easier it will be to keep that law. And the easier it is to keep that law, the easier it will be to justify yourself, to say that you've fulfilled God's expectations, you've done what's necessary to put yourself right with God.

WHITTILING DOWN Isn't that what **we** try to do with **all of God's commands?** We **whittle down** what He asks to make them more manageable and doable. We find this exception and that special circumstance. We play with the definitions, we stretch the boundary lines. How far can we go before it's really **stealing** or **lying** or **gossip** or **sexual immorality** or **revenge**? We're always looking for the minimum requirement that we need to fulfill, just enough to get by. Of course, when we play those kinds of games, we reveal that we're not keeping the most important commandment of all, namely, to love God with everything that we are. It shows that we aren't doing God's Will from the heart, but just outwardly, mechanically, so that we can get some sort of reward in the end.

LOOPHOLES "*Who is my neighbor?*" Ahh, the loophole-seeking question behind those words is, "*Who ISN'T my neighbor? Who can I exclude from having to love and care for?*" Jesus shows from His answer that **no one** is excluded. **Everyone** is your neighbor, anybody who comes across your path, especially someone in need. Jesus teaches the lawyer that the neighbor is not only someone that you like but also the **person that you don't like**. It's not only the person who is of the same race or background as you, but even a **Samaritan**. Samaritans were half-breeds despised by the Israelites, who called them dogs. And yet **he is the hero of Jesus' story**.

WHO DO YOU EXCLUDE? **Who is the person you exclude** from being your neighbor? Is it that difficult person at work or across the street? Is it a family member? Sometimes we have the hardest time showing love and respect to the people we live with every day. Or is it a person of another skin color or racial background? I think that if Jesus were telling this story

today, He might very well make the Samaritan a **Muslim** or an **Asian**. Do you exclude certain people from being the object of your love? Like the priest or the Levite who had "important" religious duties to attend to, do you justify passing by on the other side and ignoring the neighbor in need? Are you ready to **inconvenience** yourself, to throw your schedule out the window, even take a **financial hit**, to run a tab for your **neighbor** to help him or her out? Jesus said to the lawyer, "**Go and do likewise.**"

CUT WITH THE LAW We need to realize that Jesus is **not simply teaching a moral lesson** in this story of the Good Samaritan, He's trying to **cut** the lawyer, **and us**, down to size. He's saying [in essence], "*You think you've kept the Law; that you're a good person who has fulfilled God's commands? You think you can justify yourself before God and inherit eternal life by what you've done? **Think again.** My Law is much more demanding than the **neutered** version you've been working with. You **cannot** justify yourself by your own works. You have fallen **way short** of the glory of God.*"

WE'RE IN THE DITCH **You and I, then, are the ones who went down from Jerusalem**, where God's temple presence was, away from there to Jericho, that cursed city. We are the ones along the side of the road. **We** have fallen into the hands of thieves, that is, **Satan** and **sin** and the **grave**. They have stripped us of our clothing, robbing us of the glory in which we were created. And they have beaten us down, leaving us half dead, that is, physically alive but spiritually dead. The priest and the Levite, those two **figures of the Law**, can offer no help, though you might hope or expect them to. **The Law cannot rescue you**, as it is written, "*By the deeds of the Law **no one** will be justified*" [Romans 3:20].

J.C. IS THE G.S. **Only One** can rescue you, that third Person coming down the road. The real Good Samaritan in this Parable is **Jesus Himself**. When **He saw you and me lying in the ditch**, He had compassion on you and came to rescue you. He, being true God, left His Homeland of Heaven and traveled right to where you are by becoming a True Man here on earth, in this foreign territory. He didn't pass by on the other side or ignore you. He bent down **and took on Himself** your very flesh and blood, body and soul. He was like a stranger in a strange land, treated by the Jewish leaders as if He were a Samaritan. He willingly humbled Himself like this to give you aid. He put Himself in your shoes. He made **your problems His own problems**.

HEALS WITH SACRAMENTS The Gospel says, "[The Samaritan] went to him and **bandaged** his wounds, pouring on **oil** and **wine**." So also Jesus has anointed you with the **oil** of the Holy Spirit in **Baptism just as He did with little Indie Crouse today**. He comforts and soothes you who suffer from the wounds of sin with the healing balm of His mercy. And He pours out the **wine of His blood** in the Sacrament of the Altar. Just as the alcohol in wine cleanses an open wound and protects against infection, so also the

wine which is Christ's Blood cleanses our wounded souls and protects against the power of sin, as it is written, "*The blood of Jesus, God's Son cleanses us from all sin*" [1 John 1:7]. In this way, by pouring on oil and wine, **Christ, the Good Samaritan**, has fulfilled the Scriptures which say, "*I will **restore** you to health and **heal** your wounds. I will apply to you the **oil** of joy and bring the **wine** that makes glad the heart.*"

HE INSERTED HIMSELF [And the Parable continues,] "*And the Samaritan set the man on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.*" Do you see what's going on here? In order to save you, Jesus put Himself into your position. **He took your place** on that lowly animal. He became as one weak and helpless. He willingly allowed **Himself** to fall into the hands of robbers – to be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, to **suffer beating** at the hands of the powers of darkness, and to **be crucified** for you between two thieves. He was **stripped** of His clothes so that you would be **robed in His** righteousness. He was despised and rejected by men, pierced for your transgressions, bruised for your iniquities; and **by His wounds you have been healed**. Through these humble sufferings of our LORD, you have been "**carried to the inn**," that is, you have been **brought into the Church**, where the injured and infirm find true healing in Christ.

INN-STRUCTIONS And at the Inn, Jesus tells innkeepers **like myself** not to hold back in dispensing **the oil and wine of the Sacraments** to penitent believers. He promises to pay whatever it takes to see to it that the wounded are restored. Because He has done whatever it takes, everything it takes, to win your forgiveness and healing. There is **no end**, **no limit to** His sacrificial mercy and love. He can afford the price because He has already paid the price. And finally, Christ will "**return to the inn**;" He will come again on the **Last Day** to bring His people into the unending blessedness of the **Resurrection** in both body and soul.

BACK TO THE QUESTION So, **Who really is your neighbor?** Your **best** and **truest neighbor is Jesus**, the One who was the Samaritan for you, the One who showed you mercy. And now this Jesus, Who bore all of humanity's sorrows and suffering on the Cross - now He bids you to see Him in the suffering and helpless humanity around you. Your neighbor in need is "**Christ in disguise**," Christ hidden in weakness and want. Jesus, the Suffering Servant, is **there in that man or woman in the ditch for you to bend down and serve**.

[THE OTHER] QUESTION "*What must I do to inherit eternal life?*" **NOTHING** but receive. It's an inheritance. It's all yours through your brother Jesus, the everlasting Son of God. **Baptized** into Christ, clinging to Him as your Savior, you are born of God, you are children of your Father in heaven. All that is Christ's is yours. You are in the Father's good graces because of what His beloved Son has done for you. Abide now in Christ. Continue in the gifts of His Words and His Supper, and you will live. **IJ'N, Amen. SDG**

[Possible HYMN VERSE, Laache p.541, v.2]