

POSSIBLE Prayer of the Church: 15th Sunday after Trinity September 13th, 2026

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

Heavenly Father, You see how this world, its money, its clothing and its possessions tempt us to worry and doubt, yet You know all our needs of body and soul and promise to care for us. Call us by Your Gospel to entrust everything into Your sure hands. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

O LORD, You have poured out Your Spirit on Your Church, that the Gospel of Your Kingdom would be believed throughout the world. Bless the proclamation of Your Word by the pastors and missionaries You have sent, that many would hear and believe. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Gracious God, we give You thanks for the institution of holy marriage and the myriad blessings of family. Grant that these gifts would be cherished and honored in our society and especially in the Church. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Heavenly King, You provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant us good government and faithful rulers, while reminding us always that all provision comes from You. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Merciful Father, according to Your will give power to the faint and increase the strength of the sick and afflicted [*especially **Faith & Our Savior Prayers.***] ... and all those we each name and keep in our hearts in personal prayer [Brief silence]. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Increase our faith, O LORD, and grant that all who come to Your Supper may come in repentance, seeking Your forgiveness, and in the unity of a true confession. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Father in Heaven, You sustained Elijah and Your saints of old through weal and woe, plenty and scarcity. Inspire us in the light of their faith to walk through all circumstances until we join them at Your unending banquet. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Giving God, Your all-sufficient generosity will provide every need in time and eternity. Increase our faith. Still our anxious hearts. Call us to share the blessings of this world in view of Your promises in the world to come. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

We know that these petitions are pleasing to You, Heavenly Father, and that You hear them for the sake of Christ Jesus, Your Son, our LORD, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

TRINITY-15/A Matthew 6:24-34 WHY DO WE WORRY? 9.13.22 F.OS.L

PRAYER LORD God, Heavenly Father, help me to seek first Your Kingdom and Your righteousness. Give me a childlike confidence in You. Give me a confident mind, and give me blessing in my vocation. Do not give me treasure or riches, but apportion to me my allotted bread. LORD, You know our hearts and our temptations; have mercy, and fill us with Your mercy, so that we may sing joyfully and be happy all our days. IJ'N, Amen.

F.O.M.O. AGE WE LIVE IN What a more timely and poignant Gospel for us in the day and age we live in today[?!]. In preparing for today's sermon, I learned a new term [or acronym actually]. It is **FOMO**. [Do you know what FOMO is?] = **Fear Of Missing Out**. With everything today we have that is provided to us [with technology and social media] we live in anxiety of "Missing Out." *What does someone else know or is doing that I don't?* And there are now **variations** of FOMO too. 2. **MOMO** is the **Mystery Of Missing Out** - paranoia that arises when one's friends do not post anything on social media resulting in attempts to piece together what one may be missing out on. 3. **BROMO** refers to fear of one's Friends or "**Bros**" not including you, thus [you] *missing out*. 4. **FOBI** stands for the "**Fear Of Being Involved**" and refers to one avoiding being involved in something, and then 5. **FOBIA** stands for the **Fear of Being Ignored Altogether**. May I add even one more: [6.] **CHO-MO** = [Fear of] **CHatGPT & AI** taking over and making us ALL obsolete[?]

WE [NATURALLY] WORRY We **worry** and **fret** and **agonize** and **stew** about so many things. And many of these things are not insignificant or trivial. Some **are** very important - like how our children will turn out; how we'll get by when we retire; how a relative or friend will get through a sickness or trauma; or what path the LORD is leading us down in the future.

[TO BE SURE] **These are not small matters.** But then again, neither are the questions, "*What shall we eat?*" or "*What shall we drink?*" or "*What shall we wear?*" There aren't too many things more basic than food and clothing. Yet Jesus tells us [Gospel] **not to worry** about them. If that's so, should we really be anxious, then, about the other things?

[WORRY] **IT'S OUR NATURE** And yet sometimes, we just can't help ourselves. We keep talking with others about these things. We obsess. We act as if it's all dependent on us and what we do and what our strategy and plans are. And then, when we're in that frame of mind, it's easy for us to treat Jesus' Words as just pie-in-the-sky religious niceties. In fact, it can seem as if He's trivializing our problems by making comparisons to birds and flowers. That's all fine and good, we say, but my life's a little more complicated than a bird. Get real. "Don't worry" just doesn't cut it when the realities of life in this fallen world set in. We can be tempted to think that He doesn't truly care or that He's just brushing off our concerns as no big deal.

NOT JUST CLICHÉS But of course, Jesus isn't throwing clichés at us to get us off His back. He doesn't treat His **adopted brothers and sisters** that way, [which is what we are actually]. And neither does His

Father, Who is **our** Father in Heaven. Our God is not a harsh, uncaring, selfish Father Who spends time with us only when He feels like it. Our Heavenly Father is the picture of perfect warmth and kindness. He's the essence of mercy and love. And so He never brushes us off, never leaves us to ourselves, never abandons us. We may say and think He does, but that doesn't make it so. We may turn a deaf ear to Him, but that's **not how He treats us**. We may be **unfaithful, disloyal, disrespectful**, and **demanding** of Him, but He never dishes it back to us. We may hold a grudge against Him because we think He did us wrong, but He is quick to forgive, quick to renew His Spirit within us, and quick to restore to us the joy of His salvation.

ANSWERING PRAYERS[?] So then, how does He answer the things that worry us? Well, we hear in the Old Testament from His **prophet Elijah** [to the widow and her son]: **"Do not fear."** The LORD will take care of you. You *may think* your back is against the wall, and that there's no hope. But, really, there is nothing to fear. **Your** bin of flour **shall NOT be used up**. Which for you means, you will always have a **place at the LORD's Table**, and always be able to **eat bread in His Kingdom**. The LORD will **never take back the anointing of your Baptism**, the healing of your soul, the undying forgiveness, and the eternal life you received when He said you were His own. And what's more [the prophet says], the LORD sends rain on the earth. Which means that He will **pour out on you His Holy Spirit** - to restore your hope, to uplift your spirit, to help you look beyond the many things that trouble you, and to cause you to believe that, no matter what you've done or what's been done to you, no matter what the future may hold for you or your children or grandchildren, the LORD will continue to take care of you, and lavish you with His love, and sustain and strengthen you. So do not fear. *"If God is for us, who can be against? He Who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also along with Him freely give us all things?"* If God has taken care of all of our eternal needs in Christ, can't we also trust Him with the earthly things?

YOU'RE **NOT** TRIVIAL That is the Word Our LORD Jesus speaks to you today by His Spirit. He's not talking about **birds** and **flowers** to **brush you off**. He's pointing to them and saying, *"The LORD takes care of them - and they are so trivial, so small. Surely, you're of more value than they are! Surely, you matter much more! They'll never be called children of God, and they're not made to commune with God. But you are."* The Son of God did not become a sparrow or a lily. **He became a Man**. He **died** as a Man to redeem you, and **rose** as a Man to conquer your death, and **ascended** to the Father's Right Hand as a Man to give you a place in Heaven. He is **coming back** as a Man, **God in the flesh**, to bring you to Himself. Your human nature has been taken up into the very nature of God Himself in Christ! What great honor the Father has bestowed on you! How could He ever forget you? **He is never negligent**. He keeps His promises. He takes care of the birds and the flowers. **He will take care of you**. So seek **first His Kingdom** and righteousness, and all these things **will** be added to you.

ACC. TO GOD'S WISDOM We must always remember that it's **according to God's wisdom** that *"all these things will be added to you."* He has said that He will work all things together for your everlasting good. And sometimes what is best for your **everlasting** good, and the good **of others**, is to **bear the cross in this world**. **Remember the earthly serves the eternal, not the other way around**. The Father never wants the passing things of this life to become a *hindrance* to your eternal life, so that you serve mammon and perish forever. And so sometimes He does multiply the flour, and men walk out of fiery furnaces and lions' dens with their body intact. But **at other times** your Heavenly Father brings His children to Himself through suffering, by bullets, starvation, tyrants, or disease. But in every case, **faith trusts** and **knows** that He is good and His steadfast love endures forever. So when our LORD says *"Do not be anxious about what you will eat or drink or wear,"* He is giving you true and proper perspective. He holds all things in His hands, most especially **your eternal welfare**.

HE KNOWS /BEST Your Heavenly Father knows what you need, **better than you know it yourself**. Dream your dreams and plan your plans all you want, but you cannot add a single second to your life. The LORD **gives** and the LORD **takes away**. Blessed be the Name of the LORD. The LORD **provides**. He **feeds** His children, not just with **bread** and **meat** and **ice cream**, but with His righteousness. He gives what we truly need: forgiveness of sins, deliverance from death and the devil, immortality.

WE HAVE IT / ALL How can we be anxious about food when we have the LORD's life-giving Body and Blood? How can we worry about new clothes and the latest fashions when we've been **robed in Christ** and wrapped up in **His righteousness**? Having these things, **we have it all**, even if we are here in **poverty**. For we have the sure promise that these perishable bodies will be clothed with the imperishable, that we will put on immortality in the Resurrection of our bodies on the Last Day. And we will take part in the Feast of Salvation, the **Marriage Feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom that has no end**.

[AGAIN,] DON'T WORRY So if you still struggle with sorrows and anxieties, know that through them **the LORD is guiding you**, keeping you close to Himself. **He is not done with you**. Your faith is not yet full. You still have loving works to perform, prayers to pray, testimonies to give, things to learn. But He **always** provides. He **always** forgives. He **always** loves. The LORD Who gave His Son into death to have you as His own, the LORD who marched through Hell with the remnants of the devil's crushed head stuck to His heel, the LORD who emptied the grave of its sting, the living LORD of Life, He will not forget you. He hears and answers all your prayers.

DO'NT WORRY. U'R FO-MO You are **worth** "FO-MO" i.e. **Far More** than sparrows or lilies. Our LORD is **ever faithful, ever true, ever merciful**. Come to His Table. Be joined to Heaven. And that is sufficient for the day. Dear Christian friends, **don't be Fearful** Of Missing Out. You have not missed out on **anything**! Your Heavenly Father **loves** you. **IJ'N, Amen. SDG**