



ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 8 AUGUST, 2021

If Christ did not rise for us,
then he did not rise at all...
In him the world arose, in him heaven arose,
in him the earth arose.
For there will be a new heaven and a new earth.
—St. Ambrose of Milan (c. 379)

GATHERING

Opening Sentences

Let us give thanks for the rising of the sun
dispelling the shadows that can rule in our hearts,
evidence of everyday resurrection.

May I rise this day with the power of Love.

Let us give thanks for the Body of Christ,
mystical presence of the divine in the world
in which we are called to play our part.

May I rise this day with the power of Love.

Let us give thanks for Spirit,
that holy breath bringing life and energy
to every element of creation.

May I rise this day with the power of Love.

Prayer of Invocation

Spirit of Life, come to me.
Enter the cold corners of my heart,
filling me with love and hope
as the realities of life drone on.
Help me get a sense of your presence
in the beauty of my prayer
and in the silence between my words.
Renew my faith that I might know
the power of your resurrection.
Amen.

ENCOUNTERING THE LIVING WORD

Preparing to Read

A major theme in Paul's letters is the thread of grace woven through the world and our lives.

Take a few minutes to recall one or two "graced moments" you experienced recently.

When did you experience joy or delight?

*Perhaps with children or grandchildren, in nature,
watching the Olympics, or spending time with a friend.*

Savour each memory as it arises. Give thanks for the "graced moments" in your life.

Scripture Reading—Ephesians 1:15–23

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And God has put all things under Christ's feet and has made Christ the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of Christ who fills all in all.

May your Word live in us,

And bear much fruit to your glory.

Reflection on the Word—*Read the written reflection at this time.*

Silent Meditation

How to meditate—from the World Community for Christian Meditation

Sit with your back straight and your feet on the floor. Close your eyes lightly. Then interiorly, silently begin to recite a single word — a prayer word or mantra. We recommend the ancient Christian prayer-word "Maranatha." Say it as four equal syllables: Ma – ra – na – tha.

Breathe normally and give your full attention to the word as you say it, silently, gently, faithfully and — above all — simply. Let go of all thoughts (even good thoughts), images, sensations and other words as they arise. Don't fight your distractions: let them go by saying your word faithfully, gently and attentively, returning to it with intention when your attention wanders.

Reflective Song

You can find this song at www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkDwd0uv178

As the moon
Pulls the ocean
So my soul
Is drawn to you
Pull me closer
As you circle
I will fall and rise in you



As the tide
Rocks the beaches
Lifting sand
As it rolls through
Lift us up
Into your dancing
We will rise
And dance with you

As the sand
Shapes the shoreline
Sculpting all
The lands anew
We will shape
The world you're dreaming
Dancing with
The rising moon



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RESPONDING WITH OUR LIVES

Prayers of the People

Holy Love, holding us like a stillpoint in the swirl of life, drawing us like a magnet to give of ourselves in service and compassion, hear us as we pray:

Fill us with life. Lead us to love.

We hold in the light of your love those in this room and beyond who are in physical, emotional, mental or spiritual pain. May they experience your comforting presence and may we be your face of friendship and care.

Fill us with life. Lead us to love.

In this week when the Government presented a response to the Closing the Gap report in parliament, we give thanks for the good efforts of leaders and society as a whole. But our hearts also break at the gulf that still exists. We pray for *makarrata*, the coming together after a struggle, for the Uluru Statement to be taken seriously, for justice and a common destiny between First and Second Peoples.

Fill us with life. Lead us to love.

We pray for the loved ones of those who died this week of COVID-19 in our country and for those who are sick or in lockdown in Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales. Grant us all resilience and hope, lift us from discouragement, come to our assistance, we pray.

Fill us with life. Lead us to love.

Finally, we give thanks for the glimmers of joy this week—for Olympic athletes sharing gold, for signs of seasonal change and the delights of nature, for friendship and kindness that endure. May these gifts assure us that your Spirit is alive and well in our world and encourage us to practice resurrection in our own lives.

Fill us with life. Lead us to love.

Disciples' Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen

Blessing—Blessing for Presence by John O'Donohue

May you awaken to the mystery of being here

And enter the quiet immensity of your own presence.

May you have joy and peace in the temple of your senses.

May you receive great encouragement when new frontiers beckon.

May you respond to the call of your gift

And find the courage to follow its path.

May the flame of anger free you from falsity.

May warmth of heart keep your presence aflame and anxiety never linger about you.

May your outer dignity mirror an inner dignity of soul.

May you take time to celebrate the quiet miracles that seek no attention.

May you be consoled in the secret symmetry of your soul.

May you experience each day as a sacred gift,

Woven around the heart of wonder.