

# **CELEBRATE SABBATH**

## **Thirteenth Sunday of the Year**

**A grateful heart opens our eyes to the abundance of blessings  
that surround us.**

### **Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24**

The book of Wisdom, written about 100 B.C. by a wise person of the Jewish community in Alexandria addresses the most popular theme of the day, "Divine Wisdom". The author begins the book by calling people to "love justice.....remembers the Lord's goodness.....and seek the Lord in integrity of heart....." because God is the witness of man's inmost self!

The ancient author of this book tells us that man is made in the image of God and so has an imperishable nature. Death is only a passing away into the eternal and imperishable life with God. The foolish see death as an affliction and destruction. But the wise know that those who died are with God celebrating the fullness of life.

**Death is not the opposite of life...just an opening into the eternal....a threshold to life in its fullness!**

### **Psalm 30**

This psalm is referred to as a song at the dedication of the temple. We do not really know which temple or at what point in history the psalmist is thinking about as he composed this poem. Whatever it may be, the dedication itself is seen as a movement from Sorrow to Joy.

For us it could be the dedication of our Chapel, or Church, down the road or around the corner or downtown or uptown or in the heart of a village.... wherever! The Psalmist says, God has lifted me up...out of the depths...actually out of misery into great joy. Because He didn't put me to shame before my enemies; He heard my cry; He healed (restored) me.

**I will extol you, O Lord, for you drew me near,  
And did not let my enemies rejoice over me.  
O Lord, you brought me up from the netherworld;  
You preserved me from among those going down into the pit.**

### **2 Corinthians 8:7,9, 13-15**

Paul writes to the Corinthians about the abundant generosity of the Churches in Macedonia. In the midst of severe trials and out of their poverty, they have given generously to the members of the Church. Paul encouraged the Corinthians to be just as generous....just as they are rich in every respect, in faith, in knowledge, etc. they may "abound in charity". Christ has become poor so that you may become rich by his poverty.

**Paul encouraged the Corinthians to willingly and generously give and share all with those in need just as Jesus gave himself totally to all.**

### **Mark 5:21-43**

There are two miracles in Mk.5:21-43 - the healing of the ruler's daughter and the healing of the woman with the hemorrhage. Each of them came with what could be interpreted as "inadequate" faith: desperate, having tried everything, with no other go.....The amazing thing is: they were all accepted, with inadequate faith - with what they brought, the way they were.

No matter how imperfectly we come, the Lord welcomes us. We do not wait until our motivations, our faith and our theology are perfect. We come....just as we are!

The ruler left all that he was....his prejudices, his dignity as a ruler, his pride, his prestige....and came, himself, to Jesus leaving his daughter when she was at the point of death. He left his "self" behind only to find his "self" again in the person of Jesus!

The woman with the hemorrhage also had to leave everything behind and risk being caught and punished for being in public with a hemorrhage. She had to go through a humiliating experience in order to reach out and touch the power that healed her and made her whole.

### **Saint of the Day, June 27 - St. Cyril of Alexandria and 14 other saints are remembered this day**

Little is known for certain of Cyril's early life. He was most likely born in Alexandria, the metropolis of ancient Egypt, between 370 and 380. A few years after his birth, his maternal uncle Theophilus rose to the powerful position of Patriarch of Alexandria. His mother remained close to her brother and under his guidance, Cyril was educated. From his writings, it appears that he received a solid literary and theological education. When Theophilus died in 412, Cyril was chosen to succeed him at the head of the Egyptian Church. He continued his uncle's policy of insisting on Alexandria's preeminence within the Church over Constantinople, despite the political prominence of the imperial capital. The two Eastern churches eventually re-established communion in approximately 418.

Ten years later, however, a theological dispute caused a new break between Alexandria and Constantinople. Cyril's reputation as a theologian, and later as Doctor of the Church, arose from his defense of Catholic orthodoxy during this time. In 428, a monk named Nestorius became the new Patriarch of Constantinople. It became clear that Nestorius was not willing to use the term "Mother of God" ("Theotokos") to describe the Virgin Mary. Instead, he insisted on the term "Mother of Christ" ("Christotokos").

During the fourth century, the Greek Church had already held two ecumenical councils to confirm Christ's eternal preexistence as God prior to his incarnation as a man. From this

perennial belief, it followed logically that Mary was the mother of God. Veneration of Mary as “Theotokos” confirmed the doctrine of the incarnation, and Christ’s status as equal to the God the Father.

Nestorius insisted that he, too, held these doctrines. But to Cyril, and many others, his refusal to acknowledge Mary as the Mother of God seemed to reveal a heretical view of Christ which would split him into two united but distinct persons: one fully human and born of Mary, the other fully divine and not subject to birth or death. Cyril responded to this heretical tendency first through a series of letters to Nestorius (which are still in existence and studied today), then through an appeal to the Pope, and finally through the summoning of an ecumenical council in 431. Cyril presided over this council, stating that he was “filling the place of the most holy and blessed Archbishop of the Roman Church,” Pope Celestine, who had authorized it.

The council was a tumultuous affair. Patriarch John of Antioch, a friend of Nestorius, came to the city and convened a rival council which sought to condemn and depose Cyril. Tension between the advocates of Cyril and Nestorius erupted into physical violence at times, and both parties sought to convince the emperor in Constantinople to back their position. During the council, which ran from June 22 to July 31, 431, Cyril brilliantly defended the orthodox belief in Christ as a single eternally divine person who also became incarnate as a man. The council condemned Nestorius, who was deposed as patriarch and later suffered exile. St. Cyril of Alexandria died on June 27, 444, having been a bishop for nearly 32 years. Long celebrated as a saint, particularly in the Eastern Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, he was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1883.

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