

# THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—PROPER 17

August 30, 2020 – 9:30 a.m.

**PRELUDE** “Christ Be My Leader” by John Behnke

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**People: who made heaven and earth.**

Pastor: If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

**People: But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

Pastor: Since we are gathered to hear God’s Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

**People: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

## SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Almighty God, Your Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption. Grant us courage to take up our cross daily and follow Him wherever He leads; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

## FIRST READING *Jeremiah 15:15–21*

O Lord, you know; remember me and visit me, and take vengeance for me on my persecutors. In your forbearance take me not away; know that for your sake I bear reproach. Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts. I did not sit in the company of revelers, nor did I rejoice; I sat alone, because your hand was upon me, for you had filled me with indignation. Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Will you be to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail? Therefore thus says the Lord: “If you return, I will restore you, and you shall stand before me. If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless, you shall be as my mouth. They shall turn to you, but you shall not turn to them. And I will make you to this people a fortified wall of bronze; they will fight against you, but they shall not prevail over you, for I am with you to save you and deliver you, declares the Lord. I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked, and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.”

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **EPISTLE** *Romans 12:9–21*

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. 11Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. 12Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be conceited. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **HOLY GOSPEL** *Matthew 16:21–28*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixteenth chapter.

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

### **APOSTLES’ CREED**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### **SERMON** “Family Vacations” Matthew 16:21-28

#### I. Where are the keys?

- As a follower of Jesus, we have to say a goodbye, bring a bag, and go on the journey.

#### II. “Say Goodbye” (Deny yourself)

- What do we deny or say “goodbye” to?
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  - S \_\_\_\_\_
- Where did we deny these things?

- III. “Bring your bag” (Take up your cross)
  - What does the cross represent? What does it mean to take up?
  - Where does our cross point?
- IV. “Go on the journey” (Follow Me)
  - Where are we headed?
  - What does Jesus urge us to keep in mind?

“Nick, do you have the keys?” “I don’t Grandpa, why?” “Well because I can’t find them! I must have lost them in the river”. This conversation took place as my two cousins, brother, myself, and Grandfather surrounded the minivan. We just got back from a few hour canoe trip, and are now staring at our shoes and cell phones locked safely in the van. After standing in front of the van for a few minutes, my Grandpa said, “Well, gentlemen, we got a long walk back. Why don’t we get started?” With those words, we started a few mile trek back to our cabin in the hot sun without shoes or drink. Family Vacations don’t always go as planned. You can lose something like keys, get lost, argue with others, siblings can squabble, you get stuck in traffic, miss the flight, the list can go on and on and on. Despite these things, family vacations are often worth it when memories like these are formed and created. In a lot of ways, being a follower of Jesus is just like going a family vacation. Although it may not always go as planned, as a follower of Jesus we have to say a goodbye, bring a bag, and go on the journey.

Every trip we take in our lives always starts with a goodbye. Whether it’s a goodbye to the dog, our house, friends, family, or Mom, (whom you should always say goodbye too), our journey of faith starts with a goodbye as well. In our text, Jesus says, **“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up His cross and follow me.”** To follow Jesus, we need to deny ourselves. What does that mean? What do we deny? What do we say “goodbye” to? Our self. We are to affirm that the self has no claim or value worth comparing with Jesus. We say goodbye to our self-righteousness. We cannot approach God on our own works and merits. We cannot plead or stand before Him on our own. We can only approach Him in Christ. We deny any self-righteousness and hold onto Christ and His righteousness. We dare not try our own. And lastly, we say goodbye to our selfishness. As sinners, we are naturally selfish, self-seeking, and sinful. We naturally put ourselves before others and can be quite good at it. Luther famously calls this tendency “incurvatus in se,” a Latin phrase that means “turned in on self.” We are to deny and say goodbye to our self, self-righteousness, and selfishness.

As baptized Christians, we already have. The word “deny” is an aorist verb, signifying an action begun at a specific point in time and continuing throughout life. When did we deny these things? When did this take place? Baptism! In baptism, we renounce the devil, and all his works, and all his ways, thereby denying our natural selves, the old Adam, the old sinful nature. We have no need for our righteousness, for we have been given Christ’s. Through our baptism and by faith, we have been made dead to sin and made alive through Jesus Christ. The lives of the baptized are a constant struggle between our sinful selves, and the Spirit. To “deny ourselves” is to daily live in our baptism and its promises. It is a life that seeks what Christ wants, what pleases Him, and does what is in accord with His will and teaching. It is a life not focused on me, but on serving God through serving others through our vocations as children, parents, neighbors, students, workers, employers, and more. It is life soaked in God’s grace as we daily return to those baptismal waters and rise again, made new. We say goodbye to our selves, self-righteousness, and selfishness. Baptism is a daily goodbye and denial of these things.

Just as a every trip has a goodbye, every trip needs a bag, or luggage. As we go on this trip of faith, we see that Jesus has a bag prepared for us. It is a cross, the very emblem of suffering and shame. It represents the hardships and persecution we *will* face by following Him. To take up the cross means that for the sake of the Word and the faith to voluntarily take and bear the hatred of the devil, of the world, of the flesh, of sin, and of death. That is not easy nor fun. Bearing the cross can be painful: we can lose friends or a job because of the Word. Relationships can forever be strained, and our image and reputation smeared and tarnished. Our livelihoods can be at stake, and so can our safety and lives. But, don’t forget what our cross points to: Jesus’ and His empty tomb.

The cross is how God deals with people in a sinful world. The cross is foolish, weird, and a symbol of death to the world, but to us Christians, it is something else. The cross for us is proof of God's unfailing love towards us, proof of His grace, and proof of His faithfulness amidst the trials and temptations that we go through. It is proof of our eternal life and salvation. Our cross points us to His!

It also points us to His empty tomb. Jesus' resurrection is the proof that His death and sacrifice were acceptable to God, and through faith, we are, too. We are forgiven of all our sin. We are forgiven for our failures in following Him, and for giving into our sinful selfishness. Because He lives, you will live. Because He lives, I will live. In Jesus Christ, empty tombs follow crosses. *Always*. Empty tombs follow crosses. Don't forget your bag.

Now we come to the third point of this trip. After saying goodbye to ourselves, grabbing our bag the cross, we have to go on the journey, we proceed on in Christ. Since we are made God's child through faith and our baptism, we have already started the journey in and through Him. For because of Christ's death and resurrection, the end goal of our trip has been opened up for us: Heaven. We have eternal life! Jesus urges us to keep this in mind.

He says, **"For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake find it."** Jesus tells us a great irony. Those who want to save their lives and to live in earthly security by not following and believing in Jesus will lose their lives eternally. By "saving" their life by not living and believing in Him, they actually lose it. Their short term gain becomes a long term loss. But by losing one's life for the sake of faith in Christ, is, ironically, where one finds life, and eternal life at that because of Jesus. Their short term loss is a long term gain.

Our Lord then gives us two questions to build on this point and to drive it home. With His questions, Jesus underlines the foolishness of chasing after a fading world while be robbed of eternal life. By taking eternal life into perspective, we can answer his two questions. Jesus says, **"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? For what can a man give in return for his soul?"** What is the answer to that when you have eternal life in perspective? Is the allure of the world ultimately worth it? Is the cost greater than the reward? No. Not at all. Following Jesus is.

Now, it is obvious that our lives won't go according to plan: sin, death, sickness, the devil, and world will hinder those plans. They will make following Jesus hard, real hard. But we can take heart in the fact that Christ is with us every step of the way, along with our baptized brothers and sisters. We aren't alone on this journey, just as I wasn't alone on that long walk back from the canoe trip. He will strengthen, encourage, and protect us on the journey. And along the way, we will see God at work in us, making us like His Son through His Word, through our baptism, and through His Supper.

Being a follower of Jesus is very similar to going on a trip. It begins with a goodbye to our old sinful nature, which we wrestle with daily through our baptism and faith. Once we said our goodbye, we grab our bag the cross, and with Christ, we will deal with the persecutions and hardships that will come up with following Him. Lastly, we proceed on the journey in Him by faith, for He knows where He is going and the way to get to Heaven. It is His home and is yours too through Him. IN HIS NAME, AMEN.

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**MUSIC DURING PREPARATION** "Come, Follow Me, the Savior Spake" *LSB* 688, by J.G. Walther

### **PREFACE**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten

Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

## **SANCTUS**

**People: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;  
Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.  
Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;  
Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!**

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In Your righteous judgment You condemned the sin of Adam and Eve, who ate the forbidden fruit, and You justly barred them and all their children from the tree of life. Yet, in Your great mercy, You promised salvation by a second Adam, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and made His cross a life-giving tree for all who trust in Him.

We give You thanks for the redemption You have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully eat and drink of the fruits of His cross and receive the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation that come to us in His body and blood.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

**People: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

## **THE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My T body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My T blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

## **PAX DOMINI**

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People: Amen.**

## **DISTRIBUTION**

*You are invited to receive the Lord's Supper if you believe and confess that Jesus Christ is your Savior from sin, you are a baptized child of the Triune God, and you believe that He gives you His body and blood in the bread and wine you receive. White grape juice can be found in the center of each tray for those who cannot receive alcohol. Children are welcome to come forward for a blessing.*

*Music during Distribution: "Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now" LSB 902, by Telemann*

## **POST-COMMUNION COLLECT**

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

## **BENEDICAMUS**

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## **BENEDICTION**

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

**People: Amen.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **POSTLUDE “Christ, Be My Leader” LSB 861**

- 1 Christ be my Leader by night as by day;  
Safe through the darkness, for He is the way.  
Gladly I follow, my future His care,  
Darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.
- 2 Christ be my Teacher in age as in youth,  
Drifting or doubting, for He is the truth.  
Grant me to trust Him; though shifting as sand,  
Doubt cannot daunt me; in Jesus I stand.
- 3 Christ be my Savior in calm as in strife;  
Death cannot hold me, for He is the life.  
Nor darkness nor doubting nor sin and its stain  
Can touch my salvation: with Jesus I reign.

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### **Acknowledgments**

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**GENEROSITY THOUGHTS:** *Matt. 16:26 – “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life?”* He who dies with the most toys ... is dead. But the one who trusts in the Lord, even though he dies, yet shall he live. We live out our trust in the Lord by faithfully fulfilling the roles God has given us to play in the home, church, and society as loving, generous people. Those who don’t know the Lord are afraid to be generous because they think that what they give away is lost to them. But we who know the Lord know that the things of this world become true blessings when they are used for God’s Kingdom.

**ORDINATION OF JOSHUA MILLER:** On September 5, 2020, Vicar Joshua Miller will be ordained. We will have this taped, and will send out the link at a later date. We are also collecting cards for Vicar Miller and his family. If you would like to send one or give him one, please leave it or send it to the church office, and we will make sure that he gets it.

**SEW MASKS AT HOME, HELP LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF!** Kits are ready! During the months of August and September the Social Ministries and Fellowship Committees are sponsoring a mask sewing project as part of the Lutheran World Relief 75,000 More! Face Mask Challenge. The masks will be delivered with International Personal Health Kits in vulnerable communities. Kits of materials and instructions are now available in the narthex. If you don't see what you need or would like us to drop off a kit or two please contact Marilyn Pierce: pierc019@umn.edu or Marie Garcia: elmaG98@aol.com. The deadline is September 10th to have our masks done. The elastic was provided through a Thrivent Action Grant. Thank you!

**HEAR "THE LUTHERAN HOUR"** on Sunday mornings at 6:05 a.m. on WCCO 830 AM radio. Next week's broadcast: "Jesus in the House" Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. Messy prayers, loud tables, open doors-three signs of a spiritually vibrant household. (Luke 19:1-10)