

Sunday Worship

Bulletin

**HOLY**

**TRINITY**

10:00 a.m.

May 26, 2024



## Saint John's Lutheran Church

--- Missouri Synod ---

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**Radio Broadcast at 7:30 AM on WHYN 560 AM**

### **WELCOME IN THE NAME OF JESUS, OUR LORD!**

We pray that our worship this day will be an inspiration to every one of us.

If you are a visitor or the guest of someone, please sign our Guest Book at the round table in the Foyer. Requests for prayers in this morning's service may be made by writing them on the Prayer Request form in the entryway of the church.

A Nursery for infants and toddlers is available in Room 4 on this level.

***Jesus said: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you are also to love another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35***

TO OUR VISITORS AND GUESTS: The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at this congregation is administered in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. It is celebrated in the confidence that we receive into our mouths, not just bread and wine, but as our Lord promises His true Body and Blood "through and in which we obtain the forgiveness of sins". If you are not a member of a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, we kindly ask that you arrange for a time to speak with Pastor Riley if you are interested in receiving Holy Communion.

# The Order of Holy Communion Worship

**AS WE GATHER:** The Festival of the Holy Trinity gives us an opportunity to stretch our faith. At its center is a careful delineation of doctrine. At the heart of the liturgy is the Athanasian Creed, which is challenging not only for its length but for its content as well. As he writes to Titus, Paul has special words of encouragement, writing, "But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1). Through the Lessons we hear and the Creed we speak, we faithfully join in expressing the doctrine that is our heritage.

## ✠ PROCESSIONAL HYMN NO. 506: "Glory Be to God the Father"



1 Glo - ry be to God the Fa - ther, Glo - ry be to  
2 Glo - ry be to Him who loved us, Washed us from each  
3 Glo - ry to the King of an - gels, Glo - ry to the  
4 Glo - ry, bless - ing, praise e - ter - nal! Thus the choir of



God the Son, Glo - ry be to God the Spir - it:  
spot and stain; Glo - ry be to Him who bought us,  
Church's King, Glo - ry to the King of na - tions;  
an - gels sings; Hon - or, rich - es, pow'r, do - min - ion!



Great Je - ho - vah, Three in One! Glo - ry,  
Made us kings with Him to reign! Glo - ry,  
Heav'n and earth, your prais - es bring! Glo - ry,  
Thus its praise cre - a - tion brings. Glo - ry,



glo - ry While e - ter - nal a - ges run!  
glo - ry To the Lamb that once was slain!  
glo - ry To the King of glo - ry sing!  
glo - ry, Glo - ry to the King of kings!

## ✠ CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

P: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. Our help is in the name of the Lord,

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

P: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

**C: and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

P: O almighty God, merciful Father,

**C: I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

P: Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

#### † THE ATHANASIAN CREED, Part 1

*(Early in the fourth century, a north African pastor named Arius began teaching that Jesus Christ was not truly God. The Church responded decisively in AD 325 with a statement of faith (The Nicene Creed), which confessed that Jesus is, in fact, true God. Toward the end of the fifth century, another creed was written that delved further into the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Though attributed to Athanasius, a fourth-century opponent of Arius, this anonymous creed clearly came at a later stage in the debate.)*

*The Athanasian Creed declares that its teachings concerning the Holy Trinity and our Lord's incarnation are "the catholic faith." In other words, this is what the true Church of all times and all places has confessed. More than fifteen centuries later, the Christian Church continues to confess this truth, confident that the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, has given Himself for our salvation.)*

P: Whoever will be saved shall, above all else, hold the catholic faith.

**C: Which faith, except everyone keeps whole and undefiled, without doubt he will perish eternally.**

P: And the catholic faith is this:

**C: that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance.**

P: For the Father is one person, the Son is another, and the Holy Spirit is another.

**C: But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal.**

P: Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit.

**C: The Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated.**

P: The Father infinite, the Son infinite, and the Holy Spirit infinite.

**C: The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal.**

P: And yet there are not three Eternals, but one Eternal.

**C: As there are not three Uncreated or three Infinities, but one Uncreated and one Infinite.**

P: In the same way, the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Spirit almighty;  
**C: And yet there are not three Almighty's, but One Almighty.**

P: So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God.  
**C: And yet They are not three Gods but One God.**

✠ PRAYER of the DAY

P: Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, You have given us grace to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity by the confession of a true faith and to worship the Unity in the power of the Divine Majesty. Keep us steadfast in this faith and defend us from all adversities; for You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, live and reign, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

*(Be Seated)*

✠ OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 6:1-8

*(The prophet Isaiah is given a vision of the Lord.)*

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for."

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me."

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

✠ THE ATHANASIAN CREED, Part 2

P: So the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord;

**C: and yet there are not three Lords, but One Lord.**

P: Just as we are compelled by the Christian truth to acknowledge each distinct Person as God and Lord,

**C: so also are we prohibited by the catholic faith to say that there are three Gods or Lords.**

P: The Father is not made nor created nor begotten by anyone. The Son is neither made nor created, but begotten of the Father alone.

**C: The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son, neither made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding.**

P: Thus, there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.

**C: And in this Trinity none is before or after another; none is greater or less than another;**

P: but the whole three persons are coeternal with each other and coequal, so that in all things, as has been stated above, the Trinity in Unity and the Unity in Trinity is to be worshiped.

**C: Therefore, whoever desires to be saved must think thus about the Trinity.**

P: But it is also necessary for everlasting salvation that one faithfully believe the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**C: Therefore, it is the right faith that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is at the same time God and man.**

P: He is God, begotten from the substance of the Father before all ages; and He is man, born from the substance of His mother in this age;

**C: Perfect God and perfect man, composed of a rational soul and human flesh; equal to the Father with respect to His divinity, less than the Father with respect to His humanity.**

† EPISTLE: Acts 2:14a, 22–36 *(Peter attests to the resurrection of Jesus.)*

But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them:

“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. For David says concerning him, “I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’

“Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing

that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

“The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”

Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**(Please Stand)**

† GOSPEL PROCESSIONAL

† HOLY GOSPEL: John 3:1-17 *(The love of God is shown to the world in Jesus.)*

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the third chapter.



**C** Glo-ry be to Thee, O Lord.

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.



**C:** **C** Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

† GOSPEL RECESSIONAL

† HYMN of the DAY No. **507**: “*Holy, Holy, Holy*”



1 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!  
 2 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! All the saints a - dore Thee,  
 3 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Though the dark - ness hide Thee,  
 4 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!



Ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to Thee;  
 Cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y sea;  
 Though the eye of sin - ful man Thy glo - ry may not see,  
 All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea.



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, mer - ci - ful and might - y!  
 Cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim fall - ing down be - fore Thee,  
 On - ly Thou art ho - ly; there is none be - side Thee,  
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, mer - ci - ful and might - y!



God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!  
 Which wert and art and ev - er - more shalt be.  
 Per - fect in pow'r, in love, and pu - ri - ty.  
 God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

**(Be Seated)**

† SERMON: “*Thanks! I Needed That!*”

Isaiah 6:1-8

**(Please Stand)**

† DEDICATION of OFFERINGS

† THE ATHANASIAN CREED, Part 3

P: Although He is God and man, He is not two, but one Christ: one, however, not by the conversion of the divinity into flesh, but by the assumption of the humanity into God;

**C: One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.**

P: For as the rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ,

**C: Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead,**

P: ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, God Almighty, from whence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

**C: At His coming all people will rise again with their bodies and give an account concerning their own deeds.**

P: And those who have done good will enter into eternal life, and those who have done evil into eternal fire.

**C: This is the \*catholic faith; whoever does not believe it faithfully and firmly cannot be saved.**

✠ PRAYER of the CHURCH

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

Lord of hosts, Your ways are inscrutable and Your judgments unsearchable. Through Your Word, give us an ever-growing understanding of the depths of Your riches, wisdom and knowledge, that we may glorify You forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

P: Lord of hosts, Reverend Matthew Harrison, our Synod president; Reverend Robert Beinke, our district president; Reverend Michael Coons, our circuit visitor; and Reverend David Riley, our pastor have heard Your voice calling them to be Your servants. Grant to them the Spirit so they can always say, "Here I am! Send me," to whatever You ask. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

P: Lord of hosts, You delivered up Your Son according to Your definite plan and foreknowledge to be our Savior. Make our hearts glad in this faith, that our tongues may rejoice and our flesh may dwell in hope. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

P: O Lord of hosts, You sit enthroned as King forever. Bless all who rule us in Your stead with wisdom and understanding, that truth and justice may prevail in our land and lawlessness may be kept at bay. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

P: Lord of hosts, we thank You for the many blessings You have bestowed upon this nation. Grant us a long memory to recall those who gave the full measure of devotion to our country's peace and security. Bring to mind the sacrifices of those who served faithfully until death in the protection of our freedom and in the defense of our land. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

P: Lord of hosts, uphold all who suffer in our midst by Your truth, that since You are at their right hand, they cannot be shaken. Gladden their hearts, cause their tongues to rejoice and make their flesh dwell in hope. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**



P: Lord of hosts, take away our guilt and atone for our sin by touching our unclean lips with Christ's cleansing body and blood, that we may not be lost but abide in Your holy presence forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

P: O Lord, heavenly Father, we gratefully remember the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Rejoicing in His victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from His ascension before You, where He ever stands for us as our own High Priest. Gather us together from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

### *Service of the Sacrament*



**P** The Lord be with you.



**C** And with thy spir - it.



**P** Lift up your hearts.



**C** We lift them up un - to the Lord.



**P** Let us give thanks un - to the Lord, our God.



**C** It is meet and right so to do.

P: It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, who with Your only begotten Son and the Holy Spirit are one God, one Lord. In the confession of the only true God, we worship the Trinity in person and the Unity in substance, of majesty coequal. Therefore, with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:



☐ Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,



ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He,



bless - ed is He, bless - ed is He that com - eth in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

P: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**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.**

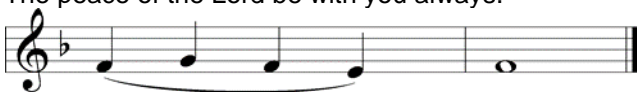
† WORDS of INSTITUTION

P: 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 + 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 + 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

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



☐ A - men.

† AGNUS DEI



☐ O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the



world, have mer-cy up - on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that



tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up - on us.



O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the



world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

**(Be Seated)**

† DISTRIBUTION HYMN No. 821: "Alleluia! Sing to Jesus"



1 Al - le - lu - ia! Sing to Je - sus; His the  
 2 Al - le - lu - ia! Not as or - phans Are we  
 3 Al - le - lu - ia! Bread of heav - en, Here on  
 4 Al - le - lu - ia! King e - ter - nal, Lord om -  
 5 Al - le - lu - ia! Sing to Je - sus; His the



scep - ter, His the throne; Al - le - lu - ia! His the  
 left in sor - row now; Al - le - lu - ia! He is  
 earth our food, our stay; Al - le - lu - ia! Here the  
 nip - o - tent we own; Al - le - lu - ia! Born of  
 scep - ter, His the throne; Al - le - lu - ia! His the



tri - umph, His the vic - to - ry a - lone.  
 near us; Faith be - lieves, nor ques - tions how.  
 sin - ful Flee to You from day to day.  
 Mar - y, Earth Your foot - stool, heav'n Your throne.  
 tri - umph, His the vic - to - ry a - lone.



Hark! The songs of peace - ful Zi - on Thun - der  
 Though the cloud from sight re - ceived Him When the  
 In - ter - ces - sor, Friend of sin - ners, Earth's Re -  
 As with - in the veil You en - tered, Robed in  
 Hark! The songs of peace - ful Zi - on Thun - der



like a might - y flood: "Je - sus out of  
 for - ty days were o'er, Shall our hearts for -  
 deem - er, hear our plea Where the songs of  
 flesh, our great High Priest, Here on earth both  
 like a might - y flood: "Je - sus out of



ev - 'ry na - tion Has re - deemed us by His blood."  
 get His prom - ise: "I am with you ev - er - more?"  
 all the sin - less Sweep a - cross the crys - tal sea.  
 priest and vic - tim In the eu - cha - ris - tic feast.  
 ev - 'ry na - tion Has re - deemed us by His blood."

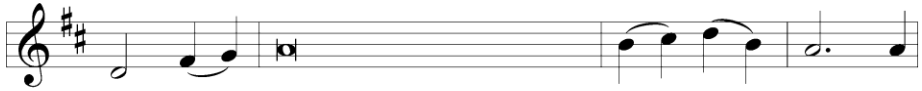
(Please Stand)

† THE BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting.

C: Amen.

† NUNC DIMITTIS




Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac-



cord-ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,




which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,



a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy



peo-ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and

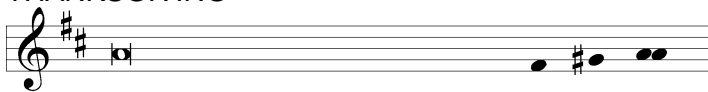


to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,



is now, and ev - er shall be, world without end. A - men.

† THANKSGIVING



O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,



† RECESSIONAL HYMN No. **822**: "Alleluia! Let Praises Ring"



1 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! To God the Fa -  
 2 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! Un - to the Lamb  
 3 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! Un - to the Ho -  
 4 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! Un - to our tri -



ther let us bring Our songs of ad - o - ra - tion.  
 of God we sing, In whom we are e - lect - ed.  
 ly Ghost we sing For our re - gen - er - a - tion.  
 une God we sing; Blest be His name for - ev - er!



To Him through ev - er - last - ing days Be wor - ship, hon -  
 He bought His Church with His own blood, He cleansed her in  
 The sav - ing faith in us He wrought And us un - to  
 With an - gel hosts let us a - dore And sing His prais -



or, pow'r, and praise, Whose hand sus - tains cre - a - tion.  
 that bless - ed flood, And as His bride se - lect - ed.  
 the Bride - groom brought, Made us His cho - sen na - tion.  
 es ev - er - more For all His grace and fa - vor!



Sing - ing, ring - ing: Ho - ly, ho - ly, God is ho - ly;  
 Ho - ly, ho - ly Is our u - nion And com - mu - nion.  
 Glo - ry! Glo - ry! Joy e - ter - nal, Bliss su - per - nal;  
 Sing - ing, ring - ing: Ho - ly, ho - ly, God is ho - ly;



Spread the sto - ry Of our God, the Lord of glo - ry.  
 His be - friend - ing Gives us joy and peace un - end - ing.  
 There is man - na And an end - less, glad ho - san - na.  
 Spread the sto - ry Of our God, the Lord of glo - ry!

† **POSTLUDE**

*The altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by Anne Simmons Grauel and family in loving memory of her parents, Ernest and Elizabeth Simmons, and her uncle Edward Brusco, on the anniversary of their birthdays in May.*

# Becoming Rich

Through the working of the Holy Spirit, Christians understand that riches do not consist of money. In fact, riches have nothing to do with money. We can have very little money and be very rich or be very wealthy and be impoverished. True riches have to do with a right relationship with Jesus Who brings us happiness, satisfaction, joy, love, and peace. Material possessions do not constitute real riches.

Material things are transitory. “When your eyes light on it, [wealth] is gone, for suddenly it sprouts wings, flying like an eagle toward heaven” (Proverbs 23:5). What we possess materially is subject to loss in a variety of ways. Our wealth can be lost in the stock market or through rust, obsolescence, and thievery. No matter how much money we may have, we have no way of guaranteeing that it can be kept safe and secure. Money can be lost, stolen, or its purchasing power lost through inflation. Investments can decline in value and businesses can fail. Our property can be burned or robbed. All material things can be gone quickly. Even if our material things stay with us, we will eventually leave them, because, at the end, we can take nothing with us.

Material goods and earthly treasures are deceitful and uncertain. In Jesus explanation of the Parable of the Sower, He said, “As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful” (Matthew 13:22). In the Apostle Paul’s letter to Timothy, he wrote, “As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, Who richly provides us with everything to enjoy” (1 Timothy 6:17).

So, if we want to be rich, it cannot be on the basis of material things. Things of this world are much too precarious a foundation on which to build a life. With God’s help, we can turn away from material things and turn toward Christ. Jesus urges us to “lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:20-21). As God’s people, our riches come from storing up riches in heaven.

Loving God with all of our heart, soul, and strength and our neighbors as ourselves builds up treasures in heaven. As the Holy Spirit leads us to loosen our grip on things of this world, we can learn to be content with what we have rather than always wanting more worldly things.

Through faith, we are rich. As Christians, we receive the riches of eternal life with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.